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Referral review completed by NIMA 3/2/01

MCGWG-M-41

NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

COMIREX MAPPING, CHARTING AND GEODESY WORKING GROUP

Minutes of Meeting Held in Room 1D918
Pentagon
1500, 7 January 1969

PRESIDING

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Purpose of Meeting - General

1. [] Chairman, indicated that the meeting was called on short notice to discuss NRO actions on placing the Doppler on the KH-4B system. He pointed out that there were critical timing considerations involved and that action had been expedited in handling this subject in COMIREX and USIB. Final action in the USIB had in itself resulted in "permissive" direction to the NRO to proceed with adding the Doppler to the KH-4B. Informal information had been received from NRO that steps were being taken to add the Doppler to four KH-4B missions beginning in March 1970 rather than five KH-4B missions beginning in the summer of 1969. The sole purpose of the meeting was for the NRO to set forth facts bearing on this action. [] asked that careful handling be given the information to be stated by [] encompassing both TK and []

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NRO Actions on Adding the Doppler Beacon to the KH-4B System

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2.a. In response to the Chairman's request, [] referred to a meeting with [] on 24 December at which time [] approved four Doppler beacon systems beginning in March 1970. This change from five Doppler beacon systems beginning in the summer 1969 was made after considering information collected by his staff. [] asked that the West Coast NRO office be contacted orally to proceed with the four systems as of March 1970 and that a follow-up message be sent. The follow-up message was sent on 6 January 1969. The scheduling for the four KH-4B missions was March, May, July and September 1970 with a funding commitment of []. At the same time, [] arranged for the Doppler beacon to be added to all []

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b. [] indicated the basis for the March 1970 date for the initial KH-4B system included considerations involving the wording of the USIB approval whereby USIB agreed that steps should be taken. He referred to this language as a fall-out of [] position that the USIB not commit itself as approving authority when accuracy criteria related to military operational needs are the justification for the collection program in concern. [] had asked his staff to look into the military operational requirement which resulted in the collection of several letters and documents which stressed the improved Minuteman system. Examination of these papers caused [] and his staff to question the statement in the USIB-COMIREX documentation on the accuracy and the timing of the requirement. [] indicated that [] CEP was the lowest number noted in the Air Force documentation at any range (DIA documentation was based upon a [] CEP for the G&G). A check of the June 1970 IOC date revealed that the improved G&G was not extremely critical as of that date. [] acted on the basis of this investigation and made the decision to proceed with four systems in March 1970.

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c. [] asked what was the basis of concluding four systems instead of five, regardless of the slippage date. [] indicated that no one could say how many missions would be needed in support of the total requirement and that part of the requirement would need to be fulfilled, in any event []. Funds to initiate the program in the summer of 1969 were also a problem. [] indicated that there was no suitable KH-4 system between the summer of 1969 and March 1970 that could be used as a carrier of the Doppler beacon. The October-November 1970 KH-4B system would not have a DISIC as now programmed.

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d. [] raised a question as to whether the documentation furnished NRO was the same documents as received in DIA. [] indicated the documents were principally those program and accuracy documents normally developed in the Air Force system command. While these documents did not appear to substantiate the criticality of the IOC date, they do show a need for improved G&G data. Accordingly, the NRO was taking action to add the Doppler beacon to the KH-4B, the only difference being one less vehicle and starting in March 1970 instead of summer 1969. He mentioned that there were a number of very tight timing actions that would be critical factors in placing the Doppler on the KH-4B for a next summer mission and time was rapidly running out on being able to meet this date. He mentioned that funding was not the primary factor in NRO choosing to start in March 1970. There were underlying considerations affecting this action which related to the general troubles and problems that have recently been experienced with the KH-4 system (problems involving UTB film, batteries and other technical problems); while adding the Doppler in itself did not loom as a great problem, it still was an additional factor that could cause things to go wrong. He further pointed out that there was a major transition going on with respect to key personnel moving from the KH-4 [] This in itself meant that less experienced personnel were having to accept responsibility for the remaining KH-4B systems.

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e. [] indicated that DIA was primarily concerned in obtaining the explanation by the NRO; however, there were two areas of concern. First, the delay from summer 1969 to March 1970 and, secondly the procedure in handling MC&G military operational requirements. He was not prepared to discuss these views further at this time, but it was clear that DIA would take immediate steps to contact Air Force concerning requirement and timing considerations.

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f. [] indicated that [] explanation relating to the requirements (informal information had previously reached his agency) was raising questions in CIA as to whether the requirement was valid.

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g. [] led discussion about new procedures that may need to be developed to handle military operational requirements and what steps might be taken. Following questioning of the requirement, it was concluded that it may be desirable to have another Working Group Meeting; but, on the other hand, it may be appropriate to discuss the matter next at the COMIREX level.

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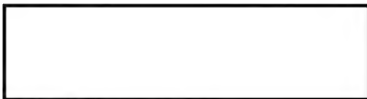
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1. [redacted] of NPIC indicated that he had recently staffed a paper in NPIC which concluded that the lower inclination which had previously been considered for the KH-4B in the short arc solution last summer was not a significant problem in intelligence exploitation. However, official COMIREX review was not completed.

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COLONEL, USA
Chairman
COMIREX MC&G Working Group

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